

In the Claims

1 (currently amended). An optical device characterized by an axis and comprising:

- A) an optical element located on the axis including first and second faces and an intermediate peripheral surface, and
- B) optical element support means for defining a positive seat for said optical element, said support means including first support means for engaging said peripheral surface and second ~~formed~~ support means in portions of said optical element support means for engaging at least one of each of said first and second faces adjacent said peripheral surface whereby said ~~optical element is locked~~ first and second support means lock said optical element in said optical device to limit motion of said optical element along the axis.

2 (currently amended). An optical device as recited in claim 1 wherein said first ~~and second~~ support means ~~conform~~ conforms to the geometry of said peripheral surface and said second support means conform to adjacent portions of said first and second faces.

3 (currently amended). An optical device as recited in claim 2 wherein said first support means includes an intermediate

portion of a housing means for engaging said peripheral surface, ~~and said second support means including said housing means having spaced crimped portions of said housing means for~~ conforming said housing means to the geometry of said first and second faces adjacent said peripheral surface.

4 (currently amended). An optical device as recited in claim 2 wherein said support means includes an intermediate portion of a housing means for engaging said peripheral surface, said housing means having first and second deformed portions for conforming said housing to the geometry of said first and second faces adjacent to and about said peripheral surface.

5 (currently amended). An optical device as recited in claim 2 wherein each of said support means includes first and second axially extending shells each having an intermediate portion for engaging said peripheral surface, oppositely extending portions that overlie said first and second faces adjacent said peripheral surface and plastically deformed transition portions between said intermediate portion and each of said oppositely extending portions that conform to the geometry of said first and second faces adjacent said peripheral surface.

6 (original). An optical device as recited in claim 5 including means for capturing said first and second shells.

7 (currently amended). An optical device characterized by an axis and comprising:

- A) a lens set comprising at least one lens element located on the axis, said lens set including first and second faces and an intermediate peripheral surface, and
- B) lens set support means for defining a positive seat for said lens set, said support means including first support means for engaging said peripheral surface and second plastically deformed support means for engaging ~~at least one of~~ each of said first and second faces adjacent said peripheral surface whereby said lens set is locked in said optical device to limit motion along the axis.

8 (currently amended). An optical device as recited in claim 7 wherein said first ~~and second~~ support means ~~conform~~ conforms to the geometry of said lens set peripheral surface and said second support means conform to adjacent portions of ~~one of~~ said first and second faces.

9 (currently amended). An optical device as recited in claim 8 wherein said lens set ~~has a peripheral surface~~ is cylindrical ~~peripheral surface~~ and portions of said first support means that are coextensive with said peripheral surface engage said peripheral surface.

10 (original). An optical device as recited in claim 9 wherein said first support means includes an intermediate portion of a cylindrical housing for engaging said peripheral surface and said second support means includes angularly spaced crimps of said housing that overlie portions of said first and second faces adjacent said peripheral surface.

11 (currently amended). An optical device as recited in claim 9 wherein said first support means includes an intermediate portion of a cylindrical housing for engaging said lens set peripheral surface, ~~and~~ said second support means includes plastically deformed circumferentially extending portions of said housing ~~for conforming that conform~~ said housing to the geometry of said first and second faces adjacent to and about said peripheral surface.

12 (currently amended). An optical device as recited in claim 9 wherein said lens set support means includes first and second axially extending shells each having an intermediate portion of a first radius for engaging said lens set peripheral surface, oppositely extending portions having a second radius less than the first radius thereby to overlie said first and second faces adjacent said peripheral surface and plastically deformed transition portions between said intermediate portion and each of said oppositely extending portions that conform to the geometry of said first and second faces adjacent said peripheral surface wherein each of said first and second

support means includes said intermediate and transition portions.

13 (original). An optical device as recited in claim 12 including an outer housing for capturing said first and second shells.

14 (currently amended). An endoscope comprising a plurality of optical elements formed as optical modules, each of said optical modules comprising:

- A) a set of at least one optical element taken from the group of lenses, spacers, windows and prisms located on ~~the~~an axis, said optical element set including first and second faces and an intermediate peripheral surface, and
- B) optical element support means extending along the axis for defining a positive seat for said optical element set, said support means including first support means for engaging said optical element set intermediate peripheral surface and second plastically deformed support means for engaging said first and second optical element set faces adjacent said peripheral surface whereby said optical element is locked in said optical ~~device~~module to limit motion along the axis.

15 (currently amended). An endoscope as recited in claim 14 wherein said first ~~and second~~ support means ~~conform~~ conforms to the geometry of said optical element set peripheral surface and said second support means conform to adjacent portions of said first and second optical element set faces.

16 (currently amended). An endoscope as recited in claim 15 wherein said optical element set peripheral surface ~~optical element has a~~ is cylindrical ~~peripheral surface~~ and portions of said first support means that are coextensive with said peripheral surface engage said peripheral surface.

17 (currently amended). An endoscope as recited in claim 16 wherein said first support means includes an intermediate portion of a cylindrical housing for engaging said optical element set peripheral surface and said second support means includes angularly spaced crimps of said housing that overlie portions of said first and second optical element set faces adjacent said optical element set peripheral surface.

18 (currently amended). An endoscope as recited in claim 16 wherein first support means includes an intermediate portion of a cylindrical housing for engaging said optical element set peripheral surface, said second support means includes plastically deformed circumferentially extending portions of said housing for conforming said housing to the geometry of

said first and second optical element set faces adjacent to and about said optical element set peripheral surface.

19 (currently amended). An endoscope as recited in claim 16 wherein said optical element support means includes first and second axially extending shells each having an intermediate portion of a first radius for engaging said optical element set peripheral surface, oppositely extending portions having a second radius less than the first radius thereby to overlie said first and second faces adjacent said optical element set peripheral surface and plastically deformed transition portions between said intermediate portion and each of said oppositely extending portions that conform to the geometry of said first and second optical element set faces adjacent said optical element set peripheral surface wherein each of said first and second support means includes said intermediate and transition portions.

20 (original). An endoscope as recited in claim 19 including an outer housing for capturing said first and second shells.

21 (currently amended). An endoscope comprising a cylindrical sheath, objective lens means at a distal end for forming an image, relay lens means for transferring the image from said objective lens means toward ~~the~~ a proximal end and eyepiece means at ~~the said~~ proximal end for providing the image for viewing wherein at least one of said objective lens means,

relay lens means and eyepiece means comprises an optical module for being located within the sheath and wherein each said optical module comprises:

- A) a lens set of at least one lens element for directing ~~an~~ the image along an axis, said lens set being characterized by a lens set cylindrical peripheral surface and two lens set faces oriented transversely to the axis,
- B) a support means extending along the axis having a first support portion for engaging said lens set cylindrical peripheral surface and second support portions extending from said first support portion that include plastically deformed sections that conform to said lens ~~element~~ set faces adjacent said lens set peripheral surface whereby said second support portions lock said lens set to limit axial motion thereof.